

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 04047 01 OF 02 071718Z  
ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EURE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05  
INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 DODE-00 PRS-01 USIE-00 L-01  
SP-02 SSO-00 /040 W  
-----071739Z 058586 /43

O P 071704Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BONN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6222  
INFO USMISSION USBERLIN PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 04047

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR PGOV WB GW UK US FR UR  
SUBJECT: RUDOLF HESS: COLONEL BIRD'S LETTER TO THE  
PRESIDENT

REFS: (A) BONN 3899; (B) BONN 3545; (C) BONN 1212;  
(D) BONN 19026 (76); (E) BONN 10294 (76) NOTAL

BEGIN SUMMARY. ACCORDING TO "LEUTE" MAGAZINE, FORMER  
US SPANDAU COMMANDANT COLONEL BIRD HAS WRITTEN TO  
PRESIDENT CARTER CALLING FOR HIM TO PAROLE RUDOLF HESS  
OR, FAILING THAT, TO WITHDRAW US TROOPS FROM THE  
PRISON. THE ACCOMPANYING ARTICLE CONTAINS  
A FAIRLY ACCURATE DESCRIPTION OF PLANS  
FOR THE DISPOSITION OF HESS' REMAINS -- THE FIRST TIME  
THIS HAS BEEN PUBLISHED, SO FAR AS WE ARE AWARE.  
END SUMMARY.

1. AS FEATURED IN AN ARTICLE ON RUDOLF HESS IN THE  
MARCH 7 "LEUTE" (PEOPLE) MAGAZINE, THE FORMER US  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 04047 01 OF 02 071718Z

COMMANDANT OF SPANDAU PRISON, RETIRED COLONEL  
EUGENE K. BIRD, HAS WRITTEN TO PRESIDENT CARTER  
REQUESTING HIM TO PAROLE HESS FROM SPANDAU DURING THE  
AMERICAN MONTH. FAILING THAT, BIRD SUGGESTS THAT THE  
AMERICAN TROOPS BE WITHDRAWN FROM THE PRISON "BEFORE  
WE BECOME CORESPONSIBLE FOR A BARBAROUS  
ACT OF MEDIEVAL CRUELTY."

2. BIRD'S LETTER, DATED MARCH 1, BEGINS WITH A CATALOG OF THE BACKGROUND LEADING FROM THE NUREMBURG TRIBUNAL TO HESS' RECENT SUICIDE ATTEMPT. THE LETTER CONCLUDES:

"MR. CARTER, MR. PRESIDENT. AS A CHRISTIAN AND AN AMERICAN CITIZEN WHO IS PROBABLY MOST ACQUAINTED WITH CONDITIONS IN SPANDAU, I WOULD URGENTLY MAKE THE FOLLOWING REQUEST TO YOU.

"PLEASE MAKE A FRESH ATTEMPT TO DISCUSS WITH THE SOVIETS A REPRIEVE OF THIS PSYCHOLOGICALLY AND PHYSICALLY BROKEN OLD MAN. PLEASE EXAMINE WITH THE LONDON AND PARIS GOVERNMENTS WHAT COUNTER-CONSIDERATIONS THE WESTERN ALLIES MIGHT BE PREPARED TO MAKE. I AM SURE THAT YOU WILL FIND A SOLUTION.

"SHOULD THESE SUGGESTIONS AGAIN BE REJECTED BY THE SOVIETS, THEN LET US, AS AMERICANS, DRAW THE NECESSARY CONCLUSIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IT IS ESSENTIAL TO ACT WITH THE UTMOST DISPATCH. GIVE US AN EXAMPLE OF HUMANITY AND RELEASE RUDOLF HESS ON PAROLE, IF NECESSARY AGAINST THE WILL OF THE SOVIETS, DURING OUR ROUTINE, OBLIGATORY AMERICAN GUARD MONTH. THE BRITISH AND THE FRENCH WILL FOLLOW YOUR EXAMPLE. THEN EVERY FOURTH MONTH THE SOVIETS COULD ADHERE TO THE DEATH SENTENCE, WHICH ONLY THEY DEMANDED, AND BE  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BONN 04047 01 OF 02 071718Z

RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SLOW, TORTUOUS DEATH OF RUDOLF HESS.

"SHOULD ALL OF THIS NOT PROVE POSSIBLE, PLEASE RECALL YOUR COMMANDANT, WITHDRAW OUR SOLDIERS, THE AMERICAN GUARDS, BEFORE WE BECOME CORESPONSIBLE FOR A BARBAROUS ACT OF MEDIEVAL CRUELTY."

3. THE "LEUTE" ARTICLE ACCOMPANYING THE BIRD LETTER IS A FAIRLY STANDARD ACCOUNT OF THE SITUATION HIGHLIGHTED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS (INCLUDING A PICTURE OF THE COFFIN INTO WHICH HESS' BODY WILL BE PLACED WHEN HE DIES) AND SEASONED WITH A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF SPANDAU "INSIDER" INFORMATION, SOME DRAWN FROM ALBERT SPEER'S DIARY, SOME FROM OTHER SOURCES. IN THE LATTER CATEGORY IS WHAT APPEARS TO BE AN EXPANDED DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN AGREED UPON BY THE FOUR GOVERNORS IN 1970 FOR THE DISPOSITION OF HESS' REMAINS. FOR DRAMATIC EFFECT, THE SCENARIO LEADS

OFF THE ARTICLE AND STATES, INTER ALIA, THAT:

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 04047 02 OF 02 071714Z  
ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EURE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05  
INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 DODE-00 PRS-01 USIE-00 L-01  
SP-02 SSO-00 /040 W  
-----071739Z 058540 /43

O P 071704Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BONN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6223  
INFO USMISSION USBERLIN PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 04047

LIMDIS

-- A WARDER WOULD FIND HESS DEAD AND CALL THE  
DOCTOR AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE MONTH.

-- AT LEAST TWO DIRECTORS AND TWO DOCTORS MUST  
CONFIRM THE DEATH OF THE PRISONER.

-- THE CREMATORIUM AT WILMERSDORF IS TELEPHONED  
AND TOLD TO BE PREPARED.

-- HESS' BODY IS PLACED IN THE "UNIVERSAL COFFIN"  
AND, IN A CONVOY INCLUDING DIRECTORS AND DOCTORS,  
TAKEN TO THE CREMATORIUM.

-- AFTERWARDS, HESS' FAMILY IS INFORMED. THEY COME  
TO BERLIN AND AFTER A SHORT SERVICE THE ASHES ARE  
HANDED OVER TO THEM FOR TRANSPORTATION TO THE FEDERAL  
REPUBLIC.

4. COMMENT: AS THE AGREEMENT ON CREMATION WAS REACHED  
IN 1970 AND AS BIRD WAS COMMANDANT UNTIL 1972, WE CAN  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 04047 02 OF 02 071714Z

IMAGINE WHERE "LEUTE" GOT THE INFORMATION ON THE CREMATION SCENARIO. SO FAR AS WE KNOW, THERE WAS NEVER AN AGREEMENT AMONG THE FOUR GOVERNORS ON A DETAILED SCENARIO, PARTICULARLY ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE CREMATION WAS TO OCCUR BEFORE OR AFTER THE FAMILY WAS NOTIFIED. OTHERWISE, THE PLAN AS REVEALED BY "LEUTE" IS ACCURATE. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT EFFECT ITS PUBLICATION WILL HAVE ON OUR EFFORTS TO MODIFY THE AGREEMENT (REFS A, B, C AND D) WITH THE SOVIETS. HOWEVER, IT WILL PROBABLY PROMPT ANOTHER ROUND OF LETTERS FROM WOLF RUEDIGER HESS, INQUIRING ABOUT PLANS FOR THE DISPOSITION OF HIS FATHER'S REMAINS (REF E).  
CASH

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, PAROLE, AMNESTY, WAR CRIMES, BERLIN QUADRIPARTITE MATTERS, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, ATROCITIES, DEATHS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 07-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977BONN04047  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770078-0049  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** BONN  
**Handling Restrictions:**  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t19770387/aaaacyzf.tel  
**Line Count:** 187  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** ab5d81bc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Reference:** 77 BONN 3899, 77 BONN 3545, 77 BONN 1212, 77 BONN 19026, 77 BONN 10294  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 04-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 3190899  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** RUDOLF HESS: COLONEL BIRD'S LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PGOV, WB, GE, UK, US, FR, UR, (CARTER, JIMMY), (BIRD, EUGENE K), (HESS, RUDOLF)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgwkey:** odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/ab5d81bc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009